

11th Edition #2 November 2017
10th Edition #2 November 2017
9th Edition #2 November 2017
8th Edition #2 November 2017
7th Edition #2 November 2017
6th Edition #2 November 2017
5th Edition #2 November 2017
4th Edition #2 November 2017
3rd Edition #2 November 2017
2nd Edition #2 November 2017
1st Edition #2 November 2017

Altar Coffee Cooperative



EW! EW! EW!

EMPOWERED WORKERS EMPOWERED WORKERS EMPOWERED WORKERS



*This zine was produced by Altar Coffee Cooperative,
with creative direction, pressing and formatting by Mijnliefje
in conjunction with Ojalá Systems.*

It was handmade in Tucson, Arizona in 2017.

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*Thank you for joining Altar for our second publication.
In this edition we are focusing on the complexities of taking
care of and loving oneself in the context of globalized capi-
talism. We, as laborers, experience a high degree of abusive,
denigrative and manipulative interactions. Unfortunately
these are a common experience.*

*We hope to offer you a break from the degradation of
a capitalist system. We also would like to make this space
for incantations of inward movement in celebration of the
season and the new moon. Now is a time when many of our
internal rhythms push us to spend more time looking inward,
and sharing space with the world of spirits.*

Enjoy these poems, recipes, writings and images.

In an oppressive system, there is no choice but to be radical.

In love and solidarity,

Altar Coffee Cooperative

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Ritual. With the moon and with the seasons. Comfort in repetition. The littlest noticing and actions that guide the cycles of our lives.

Every morning I make myself coffee: put the kettle on, choose between Guatemala or Ethiopia, hand-crank grind, slow pour, serve into my favourite mug today. Even better if I have company! They can share the burden, the fun, of grinding and everyone can choose their own weird and precious mug. Little ceramic pitcher for cream, glass jar of sugar. Floral serving trays and maybe I can scrounge in the cupboard for some sort of treat, even if it's just toast and peanut butter cut into triangles. If I'm alone, I sit at my counter and daydream out the window, framed by the leaves of my growing plants. Or maybe I sit outside and notice the light and listen to the birds and breathe in the crispy now November air.

Every autumn I turn inward, spending more and more time hovel home hiding under some pile of thrifted blankets. Take a bath drink tea by candlelight daydream rediscover an old embroidery project. The things I do each darkest season to nourish the solemn somber me.

Trained from childhood, thermal snuggled next to mama kerosene heater in the kitchen each Michigan winter so that we could save money, keep the thermostat low. Or sitting crisscross applesauce, chin on the table, watching her roll tortillas and flip them on the comal. What a dream to get one delivered straight to my plate, melting drippy butter pools. And some days, hot chocolate, made slow on the stove with whole milk and cinnamon, ladled into a thrifted mug, not pre-

cious, but well used, and delivered with love into my greedy hands.

Or in college where we'd get snowed in at one of our houses, fall asleep between best friends under the thickest down comforter, the last whispers of gossip like vapor trails, trailing off from our now slumbering breaths. Wake up, still warm homemade bread and hot tea right away, bake cookies and quietly work on projects, talk about art theory and philosophy, encourage one thousand ideas in each other until we'd decide to drive home in the mid-afternoon before it gets dark again.

And now, desert me, who wears woolen shirts at 75 degrees and tells seasons by the angle of the light and who craves community in these darkest slowest days. Do you wanna study hall? And sometimes we talk and sometimes we work and sometimes I'm the lazy one taking a nap. Nourish each other with the tenderness of our hands and the love in our hearts. The sacred ritual of being alone and being together, common thread braided by sharing hot comforting sips. Do you want to be quiet together? I'll put the kettle on.

By Tracy Rose Guajardo

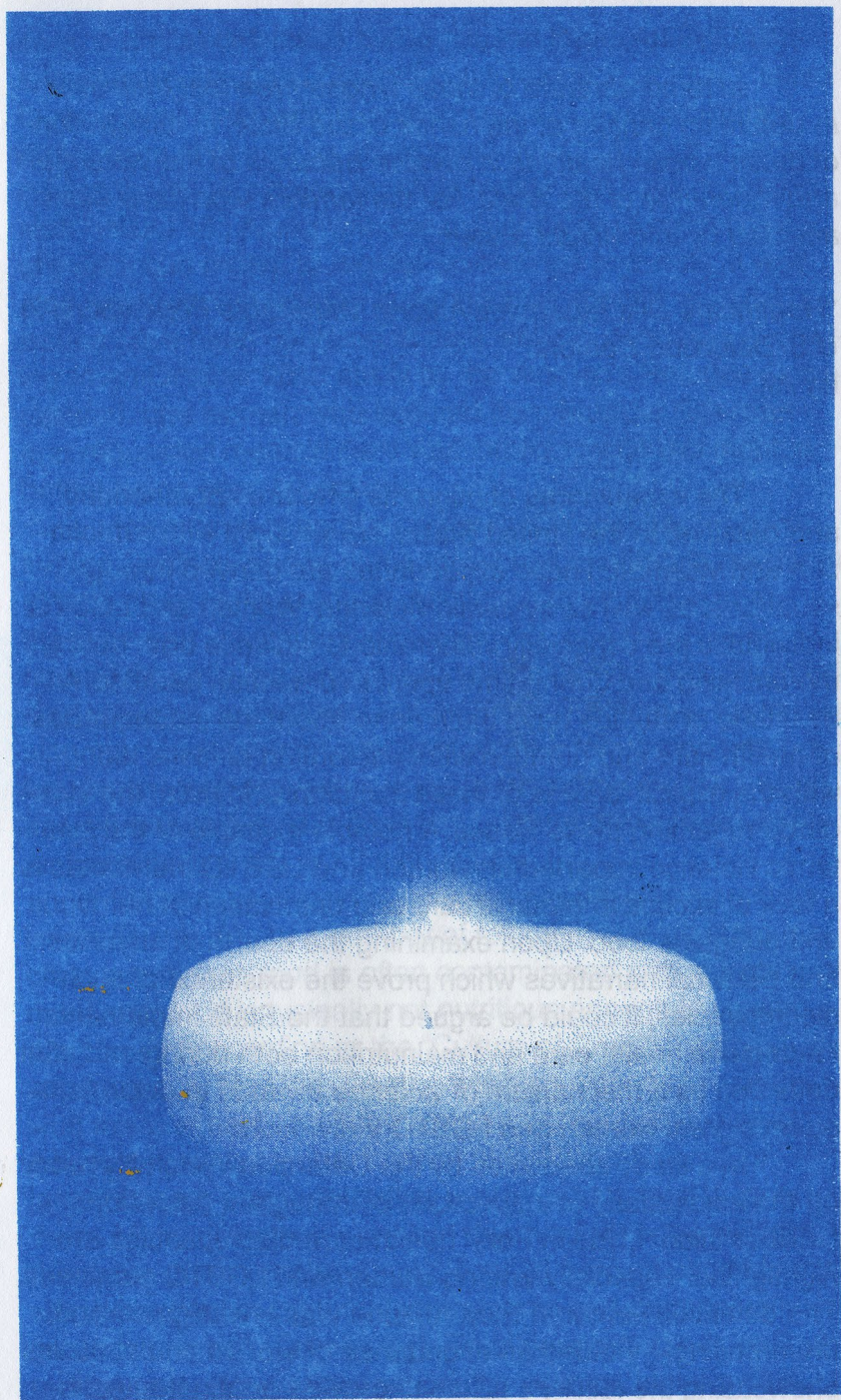


photo by JMB

In remembrance of those whose have lost their lives in detention centers at the hands of the State. In recognition of those whose health is in decline because of the violence and ignorance of the State. For the families who have been affected by this violent system.

"Healthcare Discrepancies Among Vulnerable Populations in U.S. Detention Centers"

By AK

The experiences of migrants who are apprehended and detained in the United States are wrought with exploitation and violence. These experiences are derived through situational as well as systemic violence. Women and LGBTQ individuals are especially vulnerable to violence both during the crossing and during time spent in detention facilities. A multitude of studies have been done about the inadequacies of health care and nutrition within detention centers, along with the explicit failures of these institutions to meet the standards regarding these issues. A notable example of the systemic violence imparted on women and LGBTQ individuals is a lack of access to medical care and deprivation of nutritious and adequate food. Upon examining the dearth of statistics and personal narratives which prove the existence of such discrepancies, it could be argued that the State implements inadequate health care and malnutrition both during and after detention as a mechanism of violence towards undocumented immigrant women and LGBTQ individuals.

In a study conducted by the Detention Watch Network on the inadequacy of inspections of immigrant detention facilities titled "Lives in Peril" health care discrepancies are highlighted, especially among women and LGBTQ detainees. The detention center in Eloy, Arizona was investigated and, unsurprisingly, yielded an abundance of stories and statistics showcasing the facility's failure to provide adequate health-

care, if any, to detainees being housed there. An ERO (Enforcement & Removal Operations) inspection of Eloy "...failed to recognize that medical screenings and physical exams rarely were reviewed by physicians" (NIJC 18.) In the same report, it was also noted that this facility had "...no doctors on staff" (NIJC 18.) Along with the outright lack of contact with physicians in regard to regular screenings and tests, it was also reported that women suffering from specific medical issues have been deprived of care while in detention. According to an October 2010 study by the Women's Refugee Commission, one woman who suffered from Multiple Sclerosis and requested medical care was forced to wait two months before being seen by anyone.

Pregnancy is another issue that is mishandled by detention facilities, and in some cases has resulted in the death of detainees or miscarriage. According to an article from the Women's Health Activist Newsletter, a Mexican woman named Rosa Isela Contreras-Dominguez, who was pregnant, died while being detained in San Pedro, California. There are also many accounts of pregnant women requesting and being denied food and water while in custody of Border Patrol, as well as being held in high temperature areas, even when air conditioning was available nearby.

Women in detention are often underfed and malnourished. This is due to a number of reasons; serving sizes are often insufficient, food is often contaminated with insects and mold, and food is typically not nutritious enough to sustain their health. According to the "Culture of Cruelty" report conducted by No More Deaths this also extends to women who are pregnant and have consequently requested more adequate food servings. Instead of fulfilling requests for larger serving sizes, detention center guards tend to ignore them. Many detainees are often deprived of meals outright, the same study reported that "...only 20 percent of detainees who were held in custody for more than two days actually received a meal" (Carney 37.) Food deprivation has serious mental and physical implications for women. In the article,

"Border Meals" by Megan A. Carney, these short term and long term implications are discussed, stating that "In the short term, food deprivation induces physical discomfort and psychological stress" (Carney 37.) It is also important to note that this deprivation can factor into post-detention life, resulting in food related trauma and may even lead to disordered eating. This trauma can manifest itself as a legacy of food-related discomfort as "...subsequent generations also may be inculcated to this relationship to food" (Carney 37.) Detained women are then not only having to deal with personal food related trauma, but will also be subjected to watching this experience grasp the lives of their children.

In a specific testimony, a Guatemalan woman named Pilar reported that while in detention in San Diego, women were fed food that had not been stored properly, resulting in it being contaminated with maggots. Another study, conducted by the Detention Watch Network, states that "Food and sanitation were ... present in 17 percent of the declarations submitted..." (Small, 5.) Among the complaints observed in the report were that there were no disinfectants available to clean kitchens and tables, and that insects were often found in foods, which were served past the expiration date found on packaging. Pilar, the detainee in San Diego, also reported suffering from food poisoning, resulting in weakness and weight loss. Weight loss is a consistent symptom of detainees of all genders.

Post-detention, undocumented women are also subjected to a deprivation of nutritious food. In another individual anecdote, a woman from Guerrero named Juliana talks about weight gain and a higher risk of diabetes due to the limited time and resources surrounding food that come with living as an undocumented person. Due to excessive work hours and low wages, she is usually only able to consume fast food or junk food that leaves her lethargic and malnourished. This is a common story among undocumented women, as their lives often allow little time for food preparation. Women and LGBTQ detainees are considered to be "vul-

nerable populations.” Due to this vulnerability, they are subjected to a higher likelihood of physical and sexual abuse, discomfort, and a lack of accessibility to adequate health care. Transgender detainees are among the most vulnerable of these populations as part of a refusal from ICE and detention centers to acknowledge their specific needs. According to “In Their Own Words,” a report by the ACLU of Arizona, “LGBT immigrants often face significant harassment, discrimination, and abuse at the hands of fellow detainees, as well as by detention personnel” (Lopez 23.) This abuse is significant because LGBT detainees are not only receiving inadequate care by detention facilities, but are also without social capital and subjected to abuse by their fellow detainees. This subjection is typically due to transgender detainees “..being housed with detainees of a gender with which they don’t identify” (Lopez 23.) This misunderstanding of gender identity within detention centers leads to the higher likelihood of transgender detainees being held in isolation. In isolation, these detainees are “treated harshly” and “physical and emotional safety are threatened” (Lopez 24.) In many cases, this segregation creates a high stress environment and causes the detainee to be even less likely to receive health care. This is especially problematic for those who are HIV/AIDS patients, because they need more rigorous health care and to be placed in lower stress environments.

In 2011, when the report from ACLU-AZ was conducted, ICE had no standards or policies implemented that could lend to the fair treatment of LGBTQ detainees. Furthermore, sexual assault and abuse targeting this population is abundant, but is under reported due to “...lack of information about reporting mechanisms, fear of retaliation or possible deportation...” (Lopez 23.) When these cases of sexual abuse are reported, they are typically dealt with inadequately and the targeted detainees suffer repeated incidents of abuse. This increased risk of assault adds to the stress and illness LGBTQ detainees are already at a higher likelihood of experiencing while in detention facilities.

A lack of privacy is another contributing factor to the overall negligence of the mental health of transgender detainees. According to a study titled "A Toxic Relationship: Private Prisons and U.S. Immigration Detention" conducted by the Detention Watch Network, a transgender woman who was placed in an all male housing unit was watched unapologetically by male detainees and guards while showering (Small, 5.) This person was then punished as a result of trying to put curtains up to maintain some level of privacy during bathing. This constant threat of voyeurism and sexualization both by guards and fellow detainees places transgender women at an abundant risk of psychological stress during detention.

Detainees should be afforded basic human rights, despite what the treatment they receive at detention facilities would have one believe. The article "The Rights of Irregular Migrants" by Joseph H. Carens breaks down the rights undocumented migrants do have under the U.S. legal system. Carens explains that first of all, criminals are not regarded as outlaws, which entitles them to some rights as they are not completely excluded from the legal system, and secondly, that undocumented migrants are not typically regarded as criminals in the first place (Carens, 165.) One of the basic human rights that is being neglected is the right to receive emergency medical care. When detention centers such as the one in Eloy fail to have medical doctors on staff and continuously ignore the health complaints of detainees, they are blatantly disregarding a basic human right. Immigrants in detention facilities should also be shielded from receiving injury or harm. One could argue that the risk of receiving injury and/or harm is much higher in one of these facilities with the prevalence of inedible food, sexual assault, and medical negligence. The refusal of such rights create an atmosphere that further dehumanizes detained immigrants.

Malnutrition, sexual abuse, and a general ignorance in regards to medical care are all part of the systemic ways in which the State imparts violence on detained migrant com-

munities in the United States. It is abundantly clear that these are not isolated incidents, as these atrocities are reported both statistically and through individual narratives. Basic human rights of detainees, especially women and LGBTQ individuals are disregarded when privatized detention facilities fail to provide nutritious foods, a safe haven from sexual assault, and medical care. The prevalence of health care discrepancies within a system that could easily be regulated and made to shift to more humane practices provides evidence that this system is not broken, it is working exactly how the violent State intends it to.





photo by JMB

On Labor, Lemon Bars and the Compulsion to Hustle
By Mijnliefje

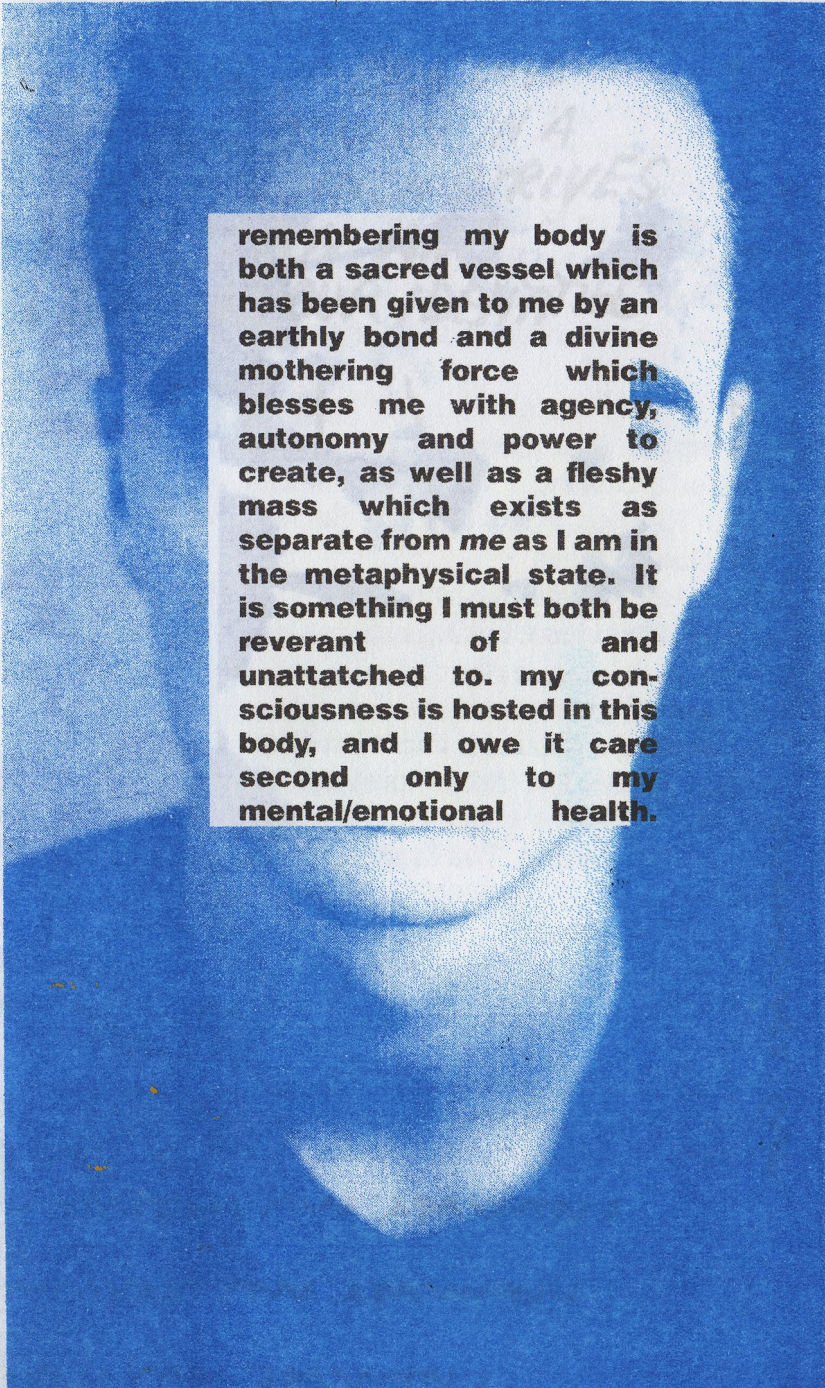
I know, I been
doing too much
lately.

always working
for money or
for art,
both sometimes.

but it's because I
want to be more like
my hands when I pull lemon bars
from the oven:

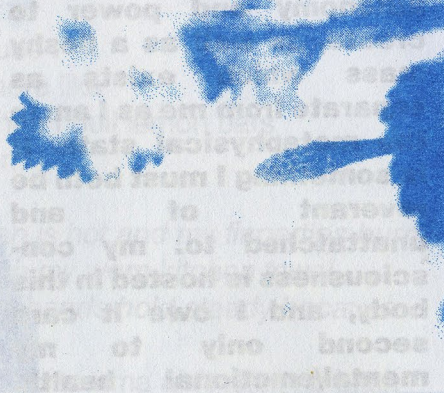
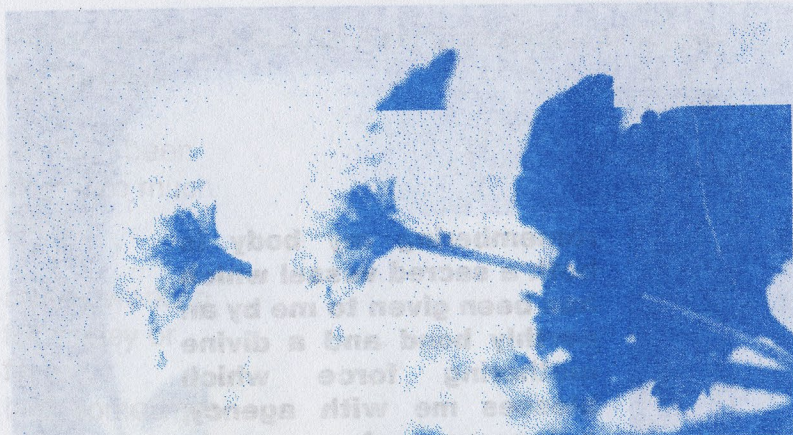
*the pan is hot and my fingertips burn
through my worn kitchen towel
but my hands hold steady because:*

1. momma ain't raise no bitch
&
2. grandma taught me to make lemon bars
and it doesn't involve dropping them



remembering my body is both a sacred vessel which has been given to me by an earthly bond and a divine mothering force which blesses me with agency, autonomy and power to create, as well as a fleshy mass which exists as separate from me as I am in the metaphysical state. It is something I must both be reverant of and unattatched to. my consciousness is hosted in this body, and I owe it care second only to my mental/emotional health.

Photo by Mijnliefje



UNRECORDED

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UNRECORDED

THE ACT OF SELF LOVE
IS REVOLUTIONARY IN A
SOCIETY WHICH STRIVES
TO DESTROY AND
CONSUME OUR IDENTITIES

WIF ACT ABCEIOUVE
WIF ACT ABCEIOUVE
WIF ACT ABCEIOUVE
WIF ACT ABCEIOUVE



photo by JMB

In memory of past Altar events, please enjoy this curated reading list of all the books that have accompanied our various themed pop-ups!

To accompany an El Salvadorian cup of coffee:

- Claudia, The Have Fired Her Again
- Oscar Martinez: The Beast
- Horacio Castellanos Moya, Senselessness

To accompany a Guatemalan cup of coffee:

- Rigoberta Menchu, I, Rigoberta Menchu
- Adrian Recinos, Popol Vuh: The Sacred Book of the Ancient Quiche Maya
- Arturo Arias, After the Bombs
- Agosto Monterroso, La Oveja Negra y Demás Fábulas

To accompany a Oaxacan cup of coffee:

- Natalia Toledo, The Black Flower and Other Zapotec Poems
- Joseph Whitecotton, The Zapotecs: Princes, Priests, and Peasants
- The Codex Borgia
- B. Tavern, "The Jungle Novels"

To accompany an Ethiopian cup of coffee:

- Dinaw Mengestu, All Our Names
- Ryszard Kapuscinski, The Emperor: Downfall of an Autocrat
- Belletech Deressa, Oromtitti: The Forgotten Women in Ethiopian History
- Maaza Mengiste, Beneath the Lion's Gaze

A few selections to commemorate Indigenous People's Day in Arizona:

- Ofelia Zepeda, *Ocean Power*
- Ofelia Zepeda, *A Tohono O'odham Grammar*
- Karl Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History*
- Layli Long Soldier, *Whereas*
- Edward H. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on Indians of the Southwest*
- Natalie Diaz, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*
- Timothy Braatz, *Surviving Conquest: A History of the Yavapai Peoples*

Selected BANNED BOOKS to honor the successful sustained resistance to Arizona's Mexican-American Studies legislation:

- Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
- Carmen Tafolla, *Curandera*
- Thomas E. Sheridan, *Los Tucsonenses: The Mexican Community in Tucson 1854-1941*
- Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima*
- Junot Díaz, *Drown*
- Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*
- Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*
- Matt De La Peña, *Mexican Whiteboy*
- Henry David Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience*
- Laura Esquivel, *Like Water for Chocolate*
- James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*
- Luis Alberto Urrea, *The Devil's Highway*
- bell hooks, *Feminism Is For Everybody*
- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
- Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*
- Lydia R. Otero, *La Calle*

Earthly Allies for Death & Transition By Cafe Con Lucha

The season of fall asks us to look at ourselves and our society and re-evaluate which ideas, identities, and habits that we are holding on to need to be released.

Cultural celebrations and rituals such as Samhain and Dia De Los Muertos embrace and reflect on this time of death and decay. All around us, nature reinforces that shedding the old to make way for the new is a necessary, and ultimately regenerative, reality of life.

We can use the transitional energy of this season by "giving death" to unhealthy concepts of power dynamics in our personal or professional lives, or shedding internalized feelings of disempowerment that may be perpetuated by individuals or larger systems of oppression.

The following plants can aid in the work of shedding and untangling from harmful or outdated attitudes and personal patterns:

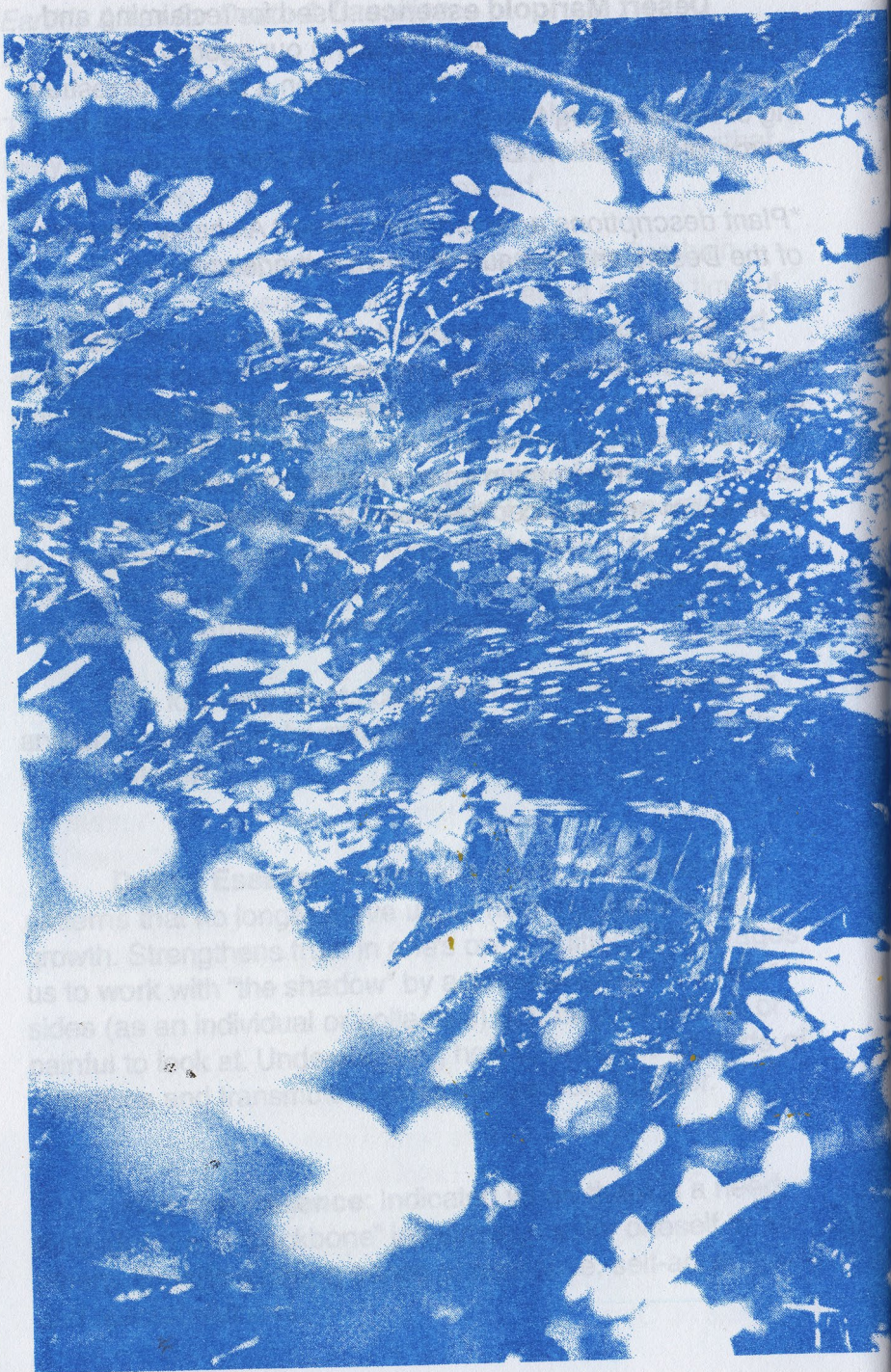
Datura Essence: Welcomes death to situations or patterns that no longer serve us, or have no place in our growth. Strengthens trust in one's own intuition. Encourages us to work with "the shadow" by acknowledging our darker sides (as an individual or collective) that may be difficult or painful to look at. Understanding how to integrate all parts of ourselves and transmute trauma into personal power.

Saguaro Essence: Indicated when there is a need for support and "backbone" in standing up for oneself or for others. Imparts a strong sense of resilience, self-acceptance, and resourcefulness.

Desert Marigold essence: Used for reclaiming and projecting personal power. Embracing our agency in all aspects of our life, when there has been a pattern of restraining or relinquishing that power to others. For feeling “at the mercy” of a situation. Being the hero of your own story.

**Plant descriptions adapted from Desert Alchemy, Essences of the Desert, and the author's own experiences.*

Essences are medicines that capture the vibrational signature of plants, minerals, or places. They are extremely accessible and sustainable because no physical material need be collected/removed to experience it's healing potential. For more information on plant essences, visit desert-alchemy.com or essenceofthedesert.wordpress.com.



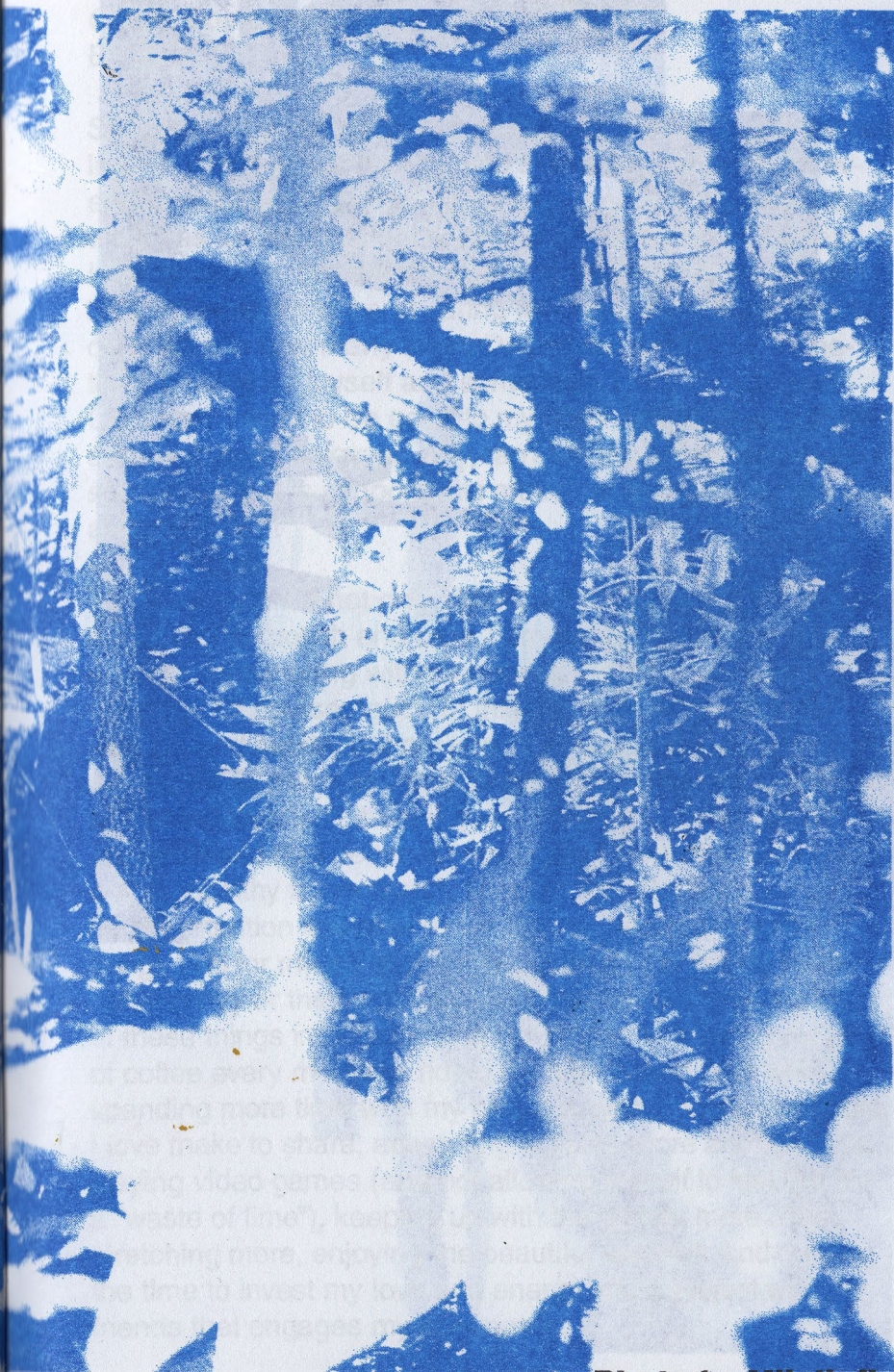


Photo by Mijnliefje



photo by JMB

Gentle Compromises

By JMB

Self care is complicated and conflicting; period. I don't believe in one simple solution or routine that works perfectly for everyone. Maintaining anything of a consistent routine besides work has always been incredibly challenging for me. Often I feel shameful, comparing myself to others and how much better they seem to be at caring for themselves than I am. I can't tell you how many times I've felt too tired to do something healthy for myself and sometimes I fear it's laziness. Obviously I want to be good to my body and spiritual person and do things I enjoy; so why can't I make the time?! How is something that is supposed to make me feel good so difficult and stressful?!

This new moon is not only significant for new beginnings, but personal growth and care. I am reminding myself that I can still be nurturing without necessarily doing something "healthy." Of course, much of this depends on a person's lifestyle and habits, but my goal is to do the things that make me happy as much as I can. Shame is destructive to growth and being tired isn't a weakness. It's okay to make gentle compromises that better fit your energy levels because it's also unhealthy to constantly struggle with guilt or shame. So my intention this new moon is to be proud of the little things I do for myself that I enjoy, even if I cannot do them consistently or they don't feel as "productive." Lately some of these things include but are not limited to: making a cup of coffee every morning, riding my bike to and from work, spending more time with my best pal, eating food the people I love make to share, attempting to listen more and talk less, playing video games (and not allowing myself to feel like it's a "waste of time"), keeping up with the dishes more often, stretching more, enjoying the beautiful weather, and making the time to invest my love and energy into a project with my friends that engages my community.

TAKE A LONG BIG
SLEEP IF YOU NEED
CALL IN SICK TO
NARROWLY DODGE
FATIGUE BUT PLS
BE GENTLE W/
* YOURSELF *



Lovesong of a Desolate Kingdom by Mijnliefje

remember to try I yesterday

Blessed city
foss coated in
dust and rose sunlight snowfall
small dark corners of the night
where, like little animals
in the darkness are earth
a people with bent backs
and low shoulders try to
get enough
to convince ourselves
we're living

this pavement folds over
rolls over
embracing the black
rubber tires of time

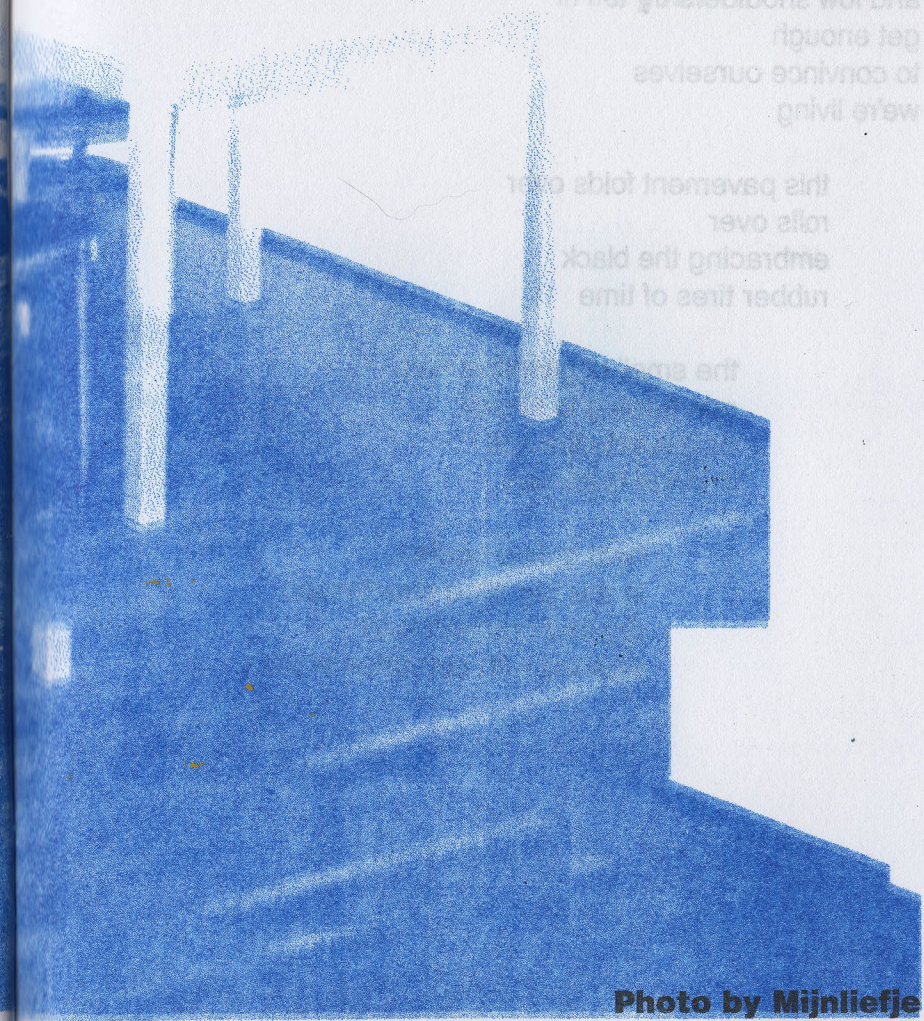


Photo by Mijnliefje

Lovesong of a Desolate Kingdom
by Mijnliefje

Blessed city
toss coated in
dust and rose sunrise light
small dark corners
where, like little animals
in the desert, we,
a people with bent backs
and low shoulders try to
get enough
to convince ourselves
we're living

this pavement folds over
rolls over
embracing the black
rubber tires of time

the smell of gasoline and
rain turning to steam
as it meets the soil
and the black sun

heat bakes bodies
in this pig filled streetscape
dry and cracked land
washed with centuries of pain

everyday I try to remember:

*flowers still bloom
through the sidewalk*

*there are still places where
sweet rainwater runs
in the gutter*

Lovesong of a Desolate Kingdom by Mijndi

Blessed city
lost coast in
dust and rose sun
flowers still bloom
small dark corners
through the sidewalk
where, like little animals
there are still places
a people's water
and low should
get enough
to convince ourselves
we're living

this pavement folds over
rolls over
embracing the black
rubber tires of time

the smell of gasoline and
rain turning to steam
as it meets the soil
and the black sun

heat bakes bodies
in this pig shit
dry and cracked land
washed with centuries of pain

EW!

EMPOWERED WORKERS

EDUCATE!

AGITATE!

ORGANIZE!

We'd love to see, and/or publish your radical writings about your experiences with labor injustices, wack bosses, capitalist oppression, classism, gendered violence, or any other relevant topics.

Send 'em our way!
altarcoffeecollective@gmail.com
altarcoffeecollective.com